MONTEREY NEWS

August 2007
VOLUME XXXVII · Number 8

The Town

Police Matters

Two applications have been received in response to the advertisement for a full-time officer, and interviews will be conducted with the candidates. Chief Gareth Backhaus also announced the upcoming retirement of Officer Walter Nourse, who has been a presence in town since his hiring in 1993. Backhaus also reported that the items in former officer Kyle Whalley's possession have been returned.

Some of the recent calls responded to by the police include a disturbance at the Lake Buel boat ramp; several false alarms; a lost dog; a stolen car (later found in Connecticut); numerous noise complaints.

Operations: The Forbes Report

Roads, Driveways, and Parking Spaces

Director of Operations Maynard Forbes reported that the barriers are down and River Road is once again open to traffic. Sandisfield Road reclamation will take place August 7th and 8th prior to paving. A letter was received regarding a second driveway being used at a Hupi Road property. Forbes stated that the driveway had existed for some time and was a legal curb cut. The same letter complained of noise from work being done on the property. There are no town regulations regarding work hours; however, state regulations allow work to be done between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. There are now three new parking spaces at Town Hall.

A dappled woodland path beckons visitors to the Bidwell House Museum. (Photo courtesy Martha Dailey.)

Buildings and Salt Sheds

Town Hall is finally getting a new furnace. Lipton Energy, the successful bidder, will replace the existing furnace this summer. Replacement was not done when the Town Hall was renovated.

The work begins on the salt shed with the first test borings. A temporary solution to a leak at Bally Gally is planned. Finding a roofer with time to do the work is proving problematic.

Safety Concerns

An attempt has been made to slow traffic down as it approaches Route 23 on Tyringham Road by placing orange warning poles, installed by the Highway Department. Additionally, Chief Backhaus discussed with the Select Board the need for improved safety measures to slow traffic down along Tyringham Road by the town beach.

The Lake Garfield dam is to have its state-mandated inspection. Occurring every two years, these inspections cost the town $4,000. The engineers look for seepage or any compromise of the earthen dam.

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Conservation/Preservation/ Restoration

The *Monterey News* is published monthly under the auspices of Monterey United Church of Christ, Monterey, MA 01245.

The Transfer Station Now and in the Future

Procedural questions arose about how people should pay for the bulky waste they bring to the transfer station. Checks are the preferred method of payment. They should be made out to "Town of Monterey." If you forget your checkbook, cash is acceptable, but remember to ask the attendants for a receipt. Know that sometime in the next two years the transfer station will need an overhaul to include covering the operation.

Everything Else

Brian Puntin, a member of the Public Boat Ramp Committee, reported on their first meeting. Already four potential sites have surfaced, in addition to some town-owned property. Some of the criteria the committee will look for initially are the terrain of the site, parking possibilities, and ease of egress and access; also there be no house on the property and the ramp should have minimal impact on neighbors.

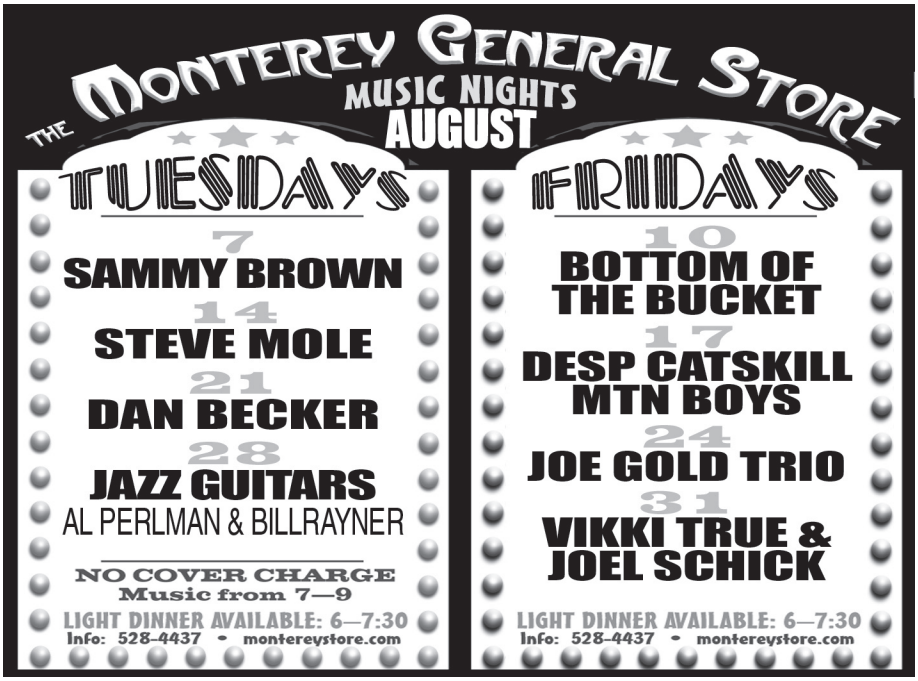
Brian also gave an update on the I Love Monterey Day plans. September 1 is the date. "Monterey Lights the Way … Again" is the theme. Green is the color as the environment takes the spotlight. Plans are to use the town website to keep people informed of who, what, and where.

The Select Board at their June 25th meeting made seventy appointments or reappointments to various town committees or positions. The positions are as varied as Police Chief, Conservation Commission member, Town Counsel, and Field Driver. At the July 2nd meeting appointments were made to the Fire Department—17 members strong. The Public Boat Ramp Committee appointments were also made; initially three members, now there are a full five. For a full list of appointments and terms consult the town website, www.monterey-ma.org.

In light of recent discussions about retaining walls along our highways and byways and who is responsible for them when they fail, the Select Board will be developing a town policy. They hope to come up with a policy that will survive changes in board membership and provide continuity to the property owners. The first step will be to identify the locations of these walls throughout town.

The Town Clerk requested that her additional phone number be included in the greeting you receive when you call Town Hall. This line is paid for from the Town Clerk's budget. The Board questioned the need for this since the new voice mail system allows access from remote locations, but agreed to allow the inclusion of the Clerk's number for now.

Laurily Epstein, Chairperson of the Agricultural Commission, resubmitted the Right to Farm Bylaw with a request that it



be placed on the next Town Meeting Warrant. Copies are available at Town Hall.

Several townspeople came before the Board with concerns. Mr. and Mrs. Julio Rodriquez addressed concerns about the condition of the town beach. The beach surface is rocky, not sandy; fences are broken and not being repaired or replaced; trash is not being picked up on a regular basis; the lifeguards were told not to report for work one week. While sympathetic to their concerns, the Select Board stated they do not have jurisdiction over other elected boards. Mr. and Mrs. Rodriquez were referred to the Park Commission, which oversees the beach. Selectmen, Wayne Burkhart, mentioned that Gould Farm was asked to do a trash pickup at the beach in lieu of the Park Commission hiring the job out. Burkhart stated that the farm did help out one week but that the Park Commission should be paying for pickup services from its own budget.

Another Park Commission-related issue has been resolved with the agreement of the Park Commission and Town Fathers to jointly pay the cost of a new light at Greene Park.

Richard Sheridan questioned the Select Board about clearing that has taken place behind the pavilion on the Fire Department's property. He is concerned about the effects this will have on drainage onto his property. He was referred to the Conservation Commission.

— Deborah D. Mielke

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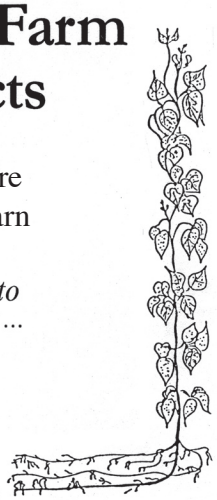

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LakeFest 2007

Saturday, August 11

9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
Fishing Derby for children
at the Hatchery pond on River Road

Town Beach Events
2:00 to 5:00 p.m.
Games, Sandcastles, Face Painting, Motorboat Rides, Kayak Rides and more!

5:00 to 6:00 p.m.
A Special Surprise for Kids

5:45 to 7:00 p.m.
Potluck Dinner & Marshmallow Roast
Between 5:00 & 5:30, bring your special creations – enough to serve 10 people. Those who bring food will be issued "Potluck tickets." (To make sure that we don't have 128 macaroni salads and nothing else, we ask you to follow these guidelines: if your last name starts with A thru H, please bring dessert, I thru R, a main course/ entrée, and S thru Z a salad, pasta or side dish.) LakeFest will supply hot dogs, hamburgers, soft drinks, plates and utensils.

7:30 p.m.
David Grover & the Big Bear Band
Music & Dancing for Everyone

9:00 p.m.
Fireworks!

This year The Friends of Lake Garfield (FLG) brings you LakeFest with the support (financial, emotional and physical) of our Town of Monterey.

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I Love Monterey Day 2007

Monterey Lights the Way … Again

Monterey made history in 1980 with "Monterey Lights the Way," a town-wide endorsement of energy conservation. If you remember it fondly or missed it back then, please join us on Saturday, September 1, when the I Love Monterey Day is transformed into "Monterey Lights the Way…Again," complete with a parade, used book sale, picnic lunch, live music, and open houses. We'll be celebrating our personal and civic commitment to a greener way of life, a cleaner environment, a sustainable future.

The Parade

The "Monterey Lights the Way … Again" parade will begin at 11:00 a.m. at Sandisfield Road and Route 23, and continue to the Firehouse. Our parade motto is "Roll, Stroll but no Petrol." Walkers, bikers, skate boarders, skaters, roller bladers, horseback riders, and oxen teams are welcome. And all residents with hybrid vehicles are encouraged to drive them. But no combustion engines, please.

We're encouraging all parade participants to come costumed as environmentally savvy ideas. Dress as a tree! Or an LED light bulb! As a clothesline! A photovoltaic panel! Or a vegetable garden! A reusable bag! An Energy Star appliance! A compost toilet! A windmill! You get the idea?

The Book Sale

What better way to recycle than to recirculate books and help the Monterey Library while you're at it? There will be a used book sale to benefit the library from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. on the green library lawn. Any book donations for the sale are greatly appreciated and can be dropped off at the library during library hours. Volunteers are also invited to come at 8 a.m. to help the Library Trustees set up for the sale and then help take down afterward at 1 p.m. Lots of good reads will be available cheap.

Picnic Lunch, Live Music, and More

The parade will end at the Firehouse Pavilion with a picnic lunch furnished by Gould Farm, featuring locally grown bounty from their gardens and fields. From 12:00 noon – 2 p.m., the Cultural Council will provide live music from the wide array of talented musicians who live in town. And an assortment of environmental groups, such as Center for Ecological Technology, Berkshire Photovoltaic Systems, Massachusetts Renewable Energy Trust, and others (we're still working on this!) will have displays and information available.

Berkshire Bikes and Blades plans to have a display of bikes and assorted equipment for people to try out.

Open Houses

The afternoon's festivities begin at 1:00 p.m. when Christine and Del Martin will show off the "greenest house in Monterey" to those interested in emulating their conservation efforts.

At 2:00 p.m., the Bidwell House will begin offering short free tours of the museum.

Also at 2:00 p.m., Roberts Woods Farm on Art School Road hosts an Open House.

Kenn Basler, proprietor of the Monterey General Store, will provide written information for a self-guided tour of the conserved land known as the Thieriot-Swan-Dunlop property on Route 23 just east of the old firehouse. Kenn is raising bees for pollination in an attempt to restore the old apple orchard on this land.

In honor of the environmental message of "Monterey Lights the Way … Again," the Monterey General Store will NOT provide plastic bags during the

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Labor Day weekend. So please remember to bring your own bags to the store that weekend—and forever after if possible.

And what's a parade without a souvenir? "Monterey Lights the Way … Again" reusable tote bags will be on sale at the Monterey General Store for $12. With the logo designed by Joel Schick, you'll need at least one, if not several, of these bags for posterity. A limited number of bags are on order, and they'll sell out quickly, so be sure to buy yours as soon as they go on sale. The Johnston brothers, owners of Blue Point Design in Sheffield, have waived the printing fee as their contribution to I Love Monterey Day.

Green Honor Roll

We are preparing an "honor roll" for those in Monterey who have invested time and money into making their homes "greener." Please help us with this list by letting us know via email (lauryepstein@gmail.com) what major changes you have made to make your home environmentally friendly. We're looking for people who have installed photovoltaic panels or a windmill; who use some alternative to gas, oil, and electricity; who now drive hybrid vehicles; who pay National Grid the "GreenStart" surcharge for green energy; who switched from power mowers to human-powered reel mowers; who built a root cellar, installed a compost toilet, or are engaging in other forms of serious conservation.

Coyotes love Monterey too. Maynard Forbes snapped this one near Curtis Road.

For More Information

The 2007 I Love Monterey Day parade will be held just as the September edition of the *Monterey News* goes to press, so stay up to date on the celebration by checking the Monterey website, Monterey-ma.org.

The "Monterey Lights the Way … Again" committee, including Emily Bernard, Susan Cooper, Laury Epstein, Ellen Farris, Maggie Leonard, Christine Martin, Ellen Pearson, Brian Puntin, Jamie Puntin, Kathryn Roberts, Susan Sellew, and Amy Shackleton, are trying to contact all of the people who marched in last year's I Love Monterey Day parade, as well as to encourage many others to participate. If you have questions or comments, please call 528-0577.

Think Green. Think Parade. Think Fun. We hope to see you there!

— Laurily Epstein

Phil Cooley D/B/A

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Board of Health News

Be Careful Around Your Wells

The Board of Health was recently reminded of something everyone may fail to appreciate adequately. Inhabitants of a residence in town noticed a change in the taste of their well water. The water was tested and the results indeed confirmed contamination of the well. Fortunately, several surrounding wells have tested normally. The Board of Health and the homeowner are continuing to investigate this incident, as the source of the contamination is still unclear.

The lesson and reminder for all of us is not to take our wells for granted. Do not think your well is above being compromised simply because it may be hundreds of feet underground. And beware that anything you do on your property may not only affect your well but that of your neighbor's or beyond. Sources of contamination are many but can be as simple as effluent from a septic system, lawn or garden fertilizers, or motor oils and other petroleum products that are improperly contained. The list is endless. Think about your well anytime you apply or spill any substance around your house.

Remember, your well is a valuable and expensive resource, particularly when used as a source of drinking water. We are all vulnerable to unhealthy drinking water but especially so are the elderly, pregnant, and children. If you have a well and notice a change in its quality in any way (taste, smell, clarity) or experience new health problems it might be appropriate to have your well tested.

Emergency Preparedness and the Medical Reserve Corps

Planning continues for the Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS). Monterey is in a coalition with Great Barrington and New Marlborough. The purpose of the EDS will be to serve the coalition communities in the event of an emergency in which the population needs either vaccines or the distribution of medication.

In the event the EDS is activated, everyone will be instructed on when, where, and how to report for treatment. Likely, the EDS will operate around the clock for three to four days in order to process everyone quickly. Obviously, such an event would occur during a very difficult time and it cannot be stressed enough how important it will be for EVERYONE to come together and proceed in a cooperative and orderly unified fashion.

Now for the appeal: WE NEED VOLUNTEERS. The November 2006 *Monterey News* contained an article discussing what is known as the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). The MRC is composed of community volunteers willing to pitch in and help perform some of the many tasks needed to pull a community through a public health event. MRC volunteers will be utilized in their own communities. Currently, Monterey has a dismal number of MRC volunteers: four. Certainly we can do better. You do not need any special qualifications to be a volunteer, nor is this a big time commitment. Clearly, retired or active medical/paramedical professionals would be useful but also too are people who simply want to help out and make a difference. The town has been challenged to enroll twenty new MRC members. There are certainly more than that in our community, either full- or part-time residents.

Learn more about the MRC through the Berkshire County Boards of Health Association, 413-441-9060, or at info@bcboha.org. Here is a carrot: if you are an MRC volunteer and the EDS is activated, you and your immediate family will be among the first to receive whatever medical assistance is being rendered.

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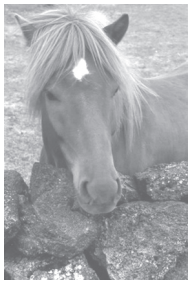

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School Committee News

The reorganization meeting of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District took place in July. Herbert Abelow of New Marlborough was elected Chairman. Deborah D. Mielke of Monterey was elected Vice-Chairman. The Commissioner of Education has approved a 1/12 budget in the amount of the proposed 2008 budget. The Committee is awaiting the outcome of "pot hole" funding for the three towns (Monterey being one of them) affected by the change in assessment as well as any Special Town Meetings that may need to take place.

— Deborah D. Mielke

Planning Board Seeks Secretary

The Monterey Planning Board is looking for a secretary. The job requires 6 hours per month, and the pay is $12/hr. Anyone interested should contact Brian Puntin at 528-3003 or bpuntin@bcn.net.

Correction

The list of Mclaughlin-Wilson Scholarship recipients in the July issue included Kathleen Tryon. The recipient of the scholarship is Kathie Tryon of Main Road.

Library Benefit Book Sale, 2

Due to rain on July 28, the used book sale to benefit the Monterey Library was much curtailed, so the Library Trustees have decided to have another sale as part of the I Love Monterey Day festivities on Saturday, September 1, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Library lawn. We appreciate the people who have already donated books for the sale and will continue to take book donations until September 1. Just drop them off at the Library when it is open (with the usual caveat: please, no text books, mildewed books, or Readers Digest–type condensed books). We also welcome volunteers to help us set up for the sale starting at 8 a.m. on the sale day and to help us put things away afterward, at 1 p.m. We greatly appreciate the support the Library receives from the Monterey community.

— Monterey Library Trustees

Cultural Council News

The Cultural Council regrets that Susan Johnson has had to step down from the Council due to state-mandated limits for how long members can serve. She will be greatly missed, and we hope she will consider returning to the Council after the required year off. Thank you, Susan!

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LakeFest, through the Eyes of Kids

On Saturday, August 11, LakeFest will, once again, delight all in Monterey. This year, Jean Germain, our renowned resident photographer, has dreamed up a doozie of an idea. Cameras in the hands of kids will photograph LakeFest through the eyes of kids. This will, no doubt, be picked up by all the international Wire Services, *60 Minutes,* et al. Well, maybe not … but the hope is that the results will make a heart-warming photo montage for our illustrious *Monterey News*.

Under Jean's and Edie Ross's supervision, disposable cameras will be purchased by Friends of Lake Garfield, distributed to kids, and later collected. FLG will have 4x6 prints made. Kids can also bring their own cameras, have 4x6 prints made, and mail them to FLG, Box 355, Monterey, MA 01245, by August 19. The best of the bunch will be sent to Will Marsh at the *Monterey News* in time for the September issue.

Any questions? Call Jean at 528-1592. Can't wait to see what kids see. This is going to be great!

— Hy Rosen

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News from the Town Clerk's Office

It gives me great pleasure to report that there will soon be web versions of both Town and Zoning Bylaws on www.monterey-ma.org. The Telecommunications Bylaw, Scenic Mountain Act, and, as soon as we can re-vote it, the Right to Farm Bylaw will follow. To better serve the public, this content will be maintained directly by the Town Clerk's office. At a conference in mid-June for Massachusetts Town Clerks, Linda Thorpe and I had a chance to talk with representatives from Virtual Town Hall (Monterey's web host). Their exhibit was directed specifically at Clerks and highlighted the web maintenance of Bylaws, Town Meeting Minutes, and fee and licensing information.

We discovered that some towns experienced discrepancies in differing versions of web, print, and Attorney General–approved Bylaws. This can inadvertently lead to costly homeowner and builder errors. To avoid such problems, most Clerks now maintain their own web content. To aid this endeavor, Virtual Town Hall software is configured to allow each government department to maintain its content areas. With the help of other Clerks nearby who have already posted to their own web pages with this company, we can efficiently follow suit. We appreciate the immediacy with which the Select Board worked with our office to approve a separate license for Clerk web pages on the Town website.

At the same conference, we learned of new Commonwealth plans to deliver town vital records via the Internet. This will enable the Commonwealth to avoid the cumbersome process of scanning and recognizing the records we send them when capturing information essential to their production of records for the public. We were given a target date by which we should be prepared to deliver vitals in this fashion, but knew we were unable to comply given the state of our equipment. The Clerk's computer was some ten years old, had no connection to the Internet, and when power went out a minimum of two hours was needed to reinstall software and recover its use.

The Select Board understood our dilemma and helped prepare us for the new requirements of the office. Utilizing a Commonwealth purchasing program, and end-of-fiscal-year sales, we acquired a very adequate new minitower and large flat-screen monitor. We were pleased to not only obtain the state contract price, but a sale price that came bundled with the expensive software packages we needed thrown in, nearly for free. This new computer will also provide us with faxing capabilities for confidential material. It has been a pleasure working with a Select Board so quickly sensitive to resolution of these issues.

Please note that the telephone number for the Town Clerk continues to be 528-5175, as it has been for many years. This telephone rings in both my home and the office so that I can be more available on an as-needed basis while still ensuring the preparation of reports and record requests for the Commonwealth. As always, I try to answer this number in person, throughout the day and into early evening. Calls to the Town Offices at 528-1443 ext 113 could possibly experience delay in reply, since that number does not ring in my home. I do, however, check that answering machine and respond to those who have left messages.

I continue to hold public licensing hours Saturday mornings (9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) and Wednesday afternoons (4:10 to 6:00 p.m.) for both townspeople and partial-year residents. I look forward to assisting you then, as always.

— Barbara Swann, Town Clerk

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Sandisfield Arts Center Coming Events

SATURDAY, AUGUST 4th 8 pm

THE GLENGARRY BHOYS
A Celtic fusion band, blending traditional Scottish and Irish music with modern Celtic and contemporary sounds. Tickets $20.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25th 8 pm

TRIPLE PLAY RETURNS!
In a performance to benefit the Bill Crofut Arts Fund for Children. Chris Brubeck, Joel Brown and Peter "Madcat" Ruth, three outstanding and versatile musicians bring joy, virtuosity and the American spirit to our stage. Tickets $25.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 25th 10 am-3 pm

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Explore the pleasures and possibilities of painting in watercolor. All skill levels welcome. $30 pp. *Bring supplies if you have them or purchase there for a nominal fee.*

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Monterey Library Notes

On August 4th at 10:30 a.m., Greg McAdams, a motivational magician for young people will present his "Catch the Beat" library program. The criminal mastermind known only as "The Beat" is luring children away from the library and reading with a device known only as TV, and he needs to be caught. Be there!

Denise Andrus will be at the library on August 11th and 18th at 10:30 a.m., reading stories and leading activities based on the summer reading program theme. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Denise as well for decorating the library for the children's summer reading program. She has outdone herself again!

Thanks to all who donated books to the book sale. Due to rain on the originally scheduled date, July 28, the sale has been rescheduled for Saturday, September 1, as part of the I Love Monterey Day festivities. We will continue to take book donations for the sale until then, and volunteers are still welcome to help out on the sale day. The money from last year's sale was used to pay for the performers for the children's programming this summer as well as the speakers from Sisters in Crime who came to the library in July. A special thanks to the Library Trustees who voted to fund this programming!

We are moving toward membership in CWMARS, the regional system that will expand our services, but first need to complete some conversion of records. Our current project is volunteer friendly—if you have some time during open library hours stop in and give us a hand.

Don't forget our museum passes this year. In addition to passes to the Berkshire Museum, the Clark Art Institute, the Bidwell House, Mass MOCA, Hancock Shaker Village, we now have a pass to The Mount. We also have the Department of Conservation and Recreation pass, which is good for parking at any of the state parks(Benedict Pond, York Lake, and so on).

Finally, the bookmobile service from the region was only level funded with the new state budget this year, which means its funding is somewhere around what it was 5 or 6 years ago (think of what gas cost the bookmobile back then compared to now and you have to agree this is really a cut in the budget). For several years now the region has had a budget for acquisitions around what we spend here for the same purpose, but it covers the western half of Massachusetts. Unfortunately, that means we cannot count on many new items from their collection. The area that is really hurting is audio books on CD, which are more expensive by far than the printed book and even the audio book on cassette. If any people happen to have any book CDs they would be able to donate to the Monterey Library, we have many patrons who would be very grateful to have a few more titles to choose from.

— Mark Makuc, Library Director

Glynis Oliver

The new River Road bridge (largest in Monterey?) was completed in early July.

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Environmental Tips from All Over

Thanks to all of you who responded to my plea for information on how each of us can reduce our carbon footprint and live a life more attuned to environmental concerns. Thanks to the diligence and good nature of family and friends, I compiled quite a list for people to ponder. After reading it, if other ideas come to mind, please let me know so I can add to the list. And please pass the list along to anyone who might find it interesting or helpful.

Appliances

• Unplug "dormant" electrical gadgets—all those lights that are on use up a lot of energy.
• Wherever you have a lot of appliances plugged in, get a surge protector that can handle all the plugs—then turn the surge protector off when you're not using those items.
• Some believe that turning off the computer and restarting it uses more energy than putting it to sleep. Others think it doesn't hurt to turn your computer on and off to save energy.
• If you're on a municipal water system, install low flow water heads in the shower, low flow faucets in sinks, and low flow toilets.
• Use Energy Saver appliances.
• Don't have a hot tub.

Car Stuff

• Use the Sierra Club guidelines when buying gasoline. Their study determined that BP and Sunoco are "better," that Royal Dutch Shell, Chevron, Valero Energy Corporation, and Citgo are "bad," and that ExxonMobil and Conoco Phillips are "the worst."
• Plan trips and errands to be most fuel efficient, keep tires properly inflated, and change oil and air filters regularly.
• Fill your gas tank early in the morning or late at night since gas evaporates more in the heat of the day (who knew??).
• Drive an electric or hybrid car. Or, as one friend says, "Get a Prius. With snow tires."
• Walk, don't drive. Or bike. Or carpool.
• When the urge to own an SUV or any other oversized vehicle assaults you, suppress it.

Housekeeping

• Wait to do full loads of laundry and dishes.
• See if you can wear clothes more than once, and if you can do more of your laundry with cold water. (When one family's hot water heater broke last May, they learned that much of their laundry doesn't need hot water.)
• As we all probably know, hand dishwashing is much less efficient than by machine.
• If you don't have that many dishes to wash, see if your dishwasher has a top-rack-only option (mine doesn't). Also see if you can turn off the heated drying cycle.
• If you have pots and pans that need to soak, put them in the sink and use old water from the tea kettle to fill them.
• And water plants with old water from the tea kettle, too.
• Use stainless steel water containers instead of plastic.
• Use white vinegar to clean glass, bathrooms, refrigerator, floors.
• Use hydrogen peroxide instead of fabric softener, and as an anti-bacterial agent.
• Use brown or natural coffee filters, toilet paper, paper towels.
• Use only "environmentally correct" home cleaning products.
• Stop having clothes dry cleaned. (Check out Dry Cleaner's Secret.)
• Don't flush the toilet every time you use it.
• Never use plastic or throwaway paper plates or silverware.
• Stop using paper napkins. Cloth ones are better.

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• Yes, yes, now there are recyclable eating utensils that can replace plastic or paper ones. Eschew them for the real thing.
• Forego the clothes dryer and dry your clothes on a rack or a line.
• Limit showers to 5 minutes.

Recycling

• Remember that compost reduces the waste stream a lot. Recycle or compost everything you can.
• The Japanese (and maybe the Chinese) import our recycled cardboard and make "new" recycled liner board. (Paper is a growth stock; invest now!).
• Get the "wall warts" out, and reduce quantity.
• Compost yard waste that doesn't attract critters.

Shopping

• Buy local. This saves fuel for shipping goods across the country, and contributes to your local economy.
• Every item here in the U.S. (well, almost every item) comes heavily packaged, and rarely is the packaging made from recycled material. Try to take the packaging off whilst in the store and hand it back to the manager with the admonition that they should dispose of it. If enough of us do this, perhaps management will alert manufacturers to consumer dissatisfaction with excess packaging.
• ALWAYS carry your own bags to the grocery store. The "plastic or paper" issue is pointless; neither does the environment any good. So when the bagger asks, "Plastic or paper?" just reply smugly, "I bring my own bags." Added benefit: some stores give the eco-conscious bag-bringer a few cents off the total bill.

Food and Cooking

• Buy local.
• Check out eatlocal.net and consider "joining the challenge" of eating food grown within 100 miles of where you live.
• Host a "localvore" potluck dinner where all the food is grown locally. (Hint: this is easiest in summer and early fall.)
• Boycott corn and corn products unless they're organic.
• Boycott food from China.
• Grow your own food or join a CSA.
• During the "season," shop at your local farmers market.
• Eat meat once a week or less. Meat is the most "expensive" user of energy, far more so than are vegetables.
• Do not buy bottled water. Just fill a thermos with your own tap water. And buy a soda siphon to make sparkling water.
• Try not to buy heavily packaged or plastic-wrapped food.
• While you bake a cake, roast some beets on the bottom shelf.

Glynis Oliver

Get reel.

Lawns and Gardening

• Convert parts of your lawn to groundcover or meadow.
• Check out Edible Estates for reasons to make your lawn into an edible garden, and suggestions for doing so.
• Do not use pesticides. Instead, try older methods such as using ladybugs to clear up aphids.
• Plant trees. And try not to cut the ones you've got. And if you do cut them, try to use them in your efficient wood-burning stove.
• Don't burn brush, tree tops, or yard waste. Instead, make elegant living quarters for wildlife out of them.
• Mow your lawn as infrequently as possible.
• Install rain barrels for garden watering.

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• If building a new house or putting on an addition, consider radiant heat.
• Ditto a compost toilet.
• Install triple insulated windows.
• Replace large water heater with smaller one using solar power.
• Build a root cellar.
• Erect a greenhouse, and if it's of any size, use radiant heat.

Web Sites, Books, and Articles

• To save paper, read your newspapers and magazines online or at a library.
• Go to Live Earth website (liveearth.org) for their list of environmental tips (all of which have links to more information).
• *National Geographic's Green Guide* (thegreenguide.com).
• To change your lawn to an edible garden, definitely check out this website: fritzhaeg.com/garden/initiatives/edibleestages/main.html.
• Alternative energy blog: Alt-e.blogspot.com.
• Measure your carbon footprint at carbonfootprint.com.
• Website for a great magazine, "E," emagazine.com.
• Good information at energybulletin.net.
• greeenpeace.org/usa.
• It sounds frivolous, but you might like groovygreen.com.
• Try livenatural.org.
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• Helpful site with lots of links: enviro-link.org.
• We all know about nrdc.org.
• And about environmentaldefense.org.
• Try realclimate.org.
• Nifty Real Progress site: rprogress.org.
• If you're up for a challenge, look into lowimpactliving.com.
• The *International Herald Tribune* has some good information at iht.indexes/special/green/index.php.
• So long as you subscribe to the *New York Times* or buy Times Select, take the opportunity to check out the archives of the *Times*' energy collection. nytimes.com/ref/science/earth/energy.html.
• Home Energy Saver offers hes.lbl.gov.
• I like the title of this site—inspiredprotagonist.com.
• Who could resist treehugger.com?
• timesonline.typepad.com/eco_worrier.
• Friends of the Earth provides suv.org.
• And then there's worldchanging.com.
• The World Wildlife Foundation produces For a Living Planet at panda.org/news_facts/publications/living_planet_report/index.cfm.
• Go to salon.com and search for "Shopping for Carbon Credits," by Katherine Ellison (published July 2, 2007).
• A highly praised and well-reviewed book we all must read is *Low Carbon Diet: A 30 Day Program to Lose 5000 Pounds*, by David Gershon.
• A fun site that will send you a daily "hot tip" is idealbite.com.

Local Organizations to Support

• If you live in the Berkshires, join Berkshire Grown to insure their continued support of local farms and agriculture. Eating locally is one of the most important and most personal acts of eco-consciousness (berkshiregrown.org). And if you're reading this outside the Berkshires, locate your own "buy local" organization. There are hundreds of them now.
• Buy native plants wherever you live. Here in the Berkshires, buy them from Project Native (projectnative.org).
• Become a member of local environmental groups. In the Berkshires, that list starts with Green Berkshires (greenberkshires.org), and now includes Berkshires for the Earth.
• Become a member of your local land conservation group. If you're in the Berkshires and your town doesn't have one, join Berkshire Natural Resources Council (bnrc.og).

If This Were an Ideal World:

• Don't drive as much.
• Use public transportation for neighborhood, short haul and long haul travel.
• Go to sleep when the sun goes down, wake up when the sun comes up.

— Compiled by Laury Epstein

ॐ

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Bridal Song

Like the first day of creation
when you lie down by me
sun and earth shall float away
beyond the apple tree

stars will be above us
as when God first spoke
trembling in the shafting
of your every stroke

apples all around us
grown from seed of Eve
good and evil knowing
more than we conceive

serpent curled beside us
smiling in her sleep
at cries so like the flowers
that the meadows keep

like the first day of creation
a flushed and rosy tree
and fruit will fall on Eden
when you lie down by me.

— A. O. Howell

At Dawn

Fog lifts
Ferns rise
Trees shake
Earth sighs
Sun's up
Woods gleam
Grass dries
Crows scream
Brook flows
Birch leans
Bees buzz
Hawk preens
Vines climb
Squirrels leap
Weeds spread
But the bears sleep

— Ed Schur

From the Meetinghouse . . .

We're trying something new at church. On the third Sunday of every month, we have family Sunday, which means instead of hearing scripture readings and my preaching a full sermon, I tell a Godly Play story. Godly Play is a Sunday School curriculum and method based on Montessori education, and it's easily the best curriculum I've ever encountered. Now that we have several children in worship regularly, and will for the next few years as they are very young children, we've incorporated this into our worship, though with mixed success. What always works, however, is the story itself. So far, we've heard the stories of the seven days of creation, the flood and the ark and the rainbow, of Abraham and Sarah and the Great Family, of the Exodus, and most recently of the Ten Best Ways.

These last two provided a striking juxtaposition—the story of the Exodus being when the people of God were freed from slavery in Egypt, and the story of the Ten Best Ways being when Moses went up Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments. It might even cause us to wonder at how fleeting this new freedom was for the people of God. We might also wonder at the sort of God this God seems to be—a bait-and-switch sort of god, promising the people freedom and then yoking them with prohibition after prohibition. The first commandment tells us a lot about this god who would be master, who would be lord: "I am the Lord your God."

"Lord" is one of the words our *New Century Hymnal* has "phased out." Now, on the whole, I think this is an excellent hymnal. But some of the textual changes to many of the older hymns—done in the hopes of making them relevant in this "new century"—I find unfortunate, not least the overwriting of the word "Lord." My guess is that "Lord" was written out of hymns where it could be for two reasons. The first is that the word "Lord" is gender specific: it casts God as male, and exclusively so, as we never refer to God in compliment as "Lady." The second is that "Lord" conjures images of God as slavemaster or feudal lord, with all the exploitation and abuse that these social systems justified. Given how earthly lords have tended to operate, why would a god who claims this title for himself be one we would desire to know and worship and love as we are called to love?

A section of the story of the Exodus went like this: "They had to do what the Pharaoh said. They had to live where the Pharaoh said. They had to get up when the Pharaoh said. They had to go to bed when the Pharaoh said. They had to eat what the Pharaoh said. They had to do the work the Pharaoh said. They had to do everything the Pharaoh said. They were slaves." And as I learned the story, I realized that the last sentence could just as accurately conclude, "They were children," especially if instead of Pharaoh the story featured parents. Imagining the children who would be hearing this story when I would tell it on Sunday morning, I wondered whether they could relate in a particular way to the slaves in Egypt. How unfair it is to have to get up just because your parents have decided it's time. How outrageous it is to have to go to bed when, say, a lively dinner party is happening downstairs. How frustrating it is to have to eat your vegetables in order to get a cookie. What a violation it is to be ordered to the dinner table when you're in the middle of playing with tractors in your sandbox. The difference, of course, between the lives of slaves and the lives of children is the difference between most Pharaohs and most parents: it is the difference between utility and love.

I remember a story I read in the *New York Times Magazine* one Sunday shortly after Tobias, my three-year-old son, was born. The story was about the poorest town in the poorest county in Texas, bordering Mexico, where children were having children and no one, it seems, was filling the role of parent. The detail that stayed with me, like a scar, was that these children of all ages would fall asleep in the middle of the night—midnight, one or two o'clock in the morning—in front of the television from sheer exhaustion. For several weeks after reading that story, as I became increasingly comfortable with, and then deeply moved at, being a mother, I would say to myself as if it were a mantra, "Children need to be helped to sleep." And I had waking dreams of going to that town and tucking everyone into bed. Some would object, as children do. "I don't want to go to bed,"

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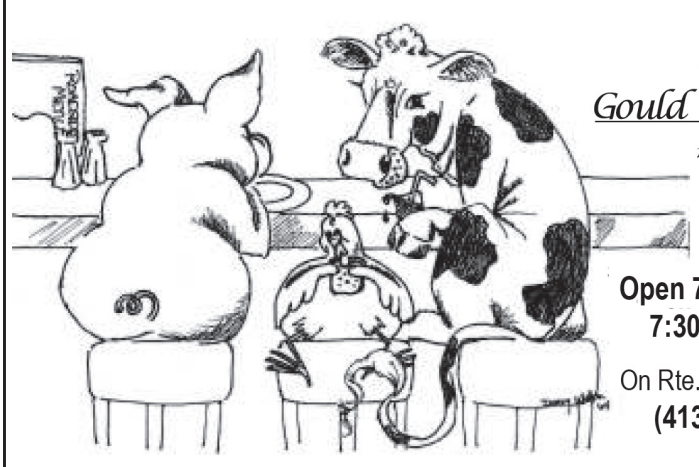

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goes a storybook we often read at bedtime in our house. "Why do I have to go to bed?" others would demand. And I would say, "Because it's bedtime." And they would counter, "Why is it bedtime?" And I would offer back that most unsatisfying answer that every grown-up has used at least once, "Because I said so." My mom even had a t-shirt that read, "Because I'm the mommy. That's why."

I took a class called "The Jewish Liturgical Year" in divinity school, and I learned that rabbis over the centuries would have such debates about the law: Why does Torah forbid eating shellfish? Why does Torah concern itself with how certain people should wear their hair and how much fringe should be on a prayer shall? Is it because shellfish is bad for you? Is it because hair around your ears will keep you warmer? Is there some practical value to these many stipulations? Is 7 o'clock by its nature a better bedtime for a child than 8 o'clock, or 12 o'clock? The rabbis my professor seemed most to respect and to agree with concluded that Torah wasn't valuable for its practicalities; it wasn't about the content of these 613 commandments. It was the simple existence of the commandments, the mere fact of the law: that was the point. It revealed to the world, and particularly to the people Israel, a God who was deeply concerned that the people be free and yet who knew that there is no freedom without law.

Of course, in the case of the Ten Commandments, most are laws with practical value. You shall not murder; you shall not steal; you shall not lie about your neighbor: the importance of these, especially in community, is clear. Just so there are a few whose importance is less clear, and may even seem to indicate that the god they reveal is something of an egomaniac: don't make and worship idols for I am the Lord your God; you shall not make wrong use of my name. And then there's this one that isn't even a commandment, and yet is first of the ten—indeed of the 613: I am the Lord your God. It's as if this statement, this introduction, is to serve as some foundation for the whole of the law.

And indeed it does. For it means that someone here is in charge—and it isn't your teacher or your boss or your big brother; it isn't some priest or preacher or politician; it isn't the taskmaster who holds you to account or the slave master who holds you in possession; it isn't the police officer who stopped you for speeding or the doctor who saved your life. Be they good to us or bad to us, it isn't any of the people with whom we share this world; it isn't even your mother, even though she might say so. True, these are all people whom we would well honor. But the one in charge is the Lord whose law is love revealed, whose desire for us is freedom and joy, whose hope for the world is abundant life, and whose "Because I said so" is "Because I love you."

— Elizabeth Goodman

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Bidwell House Quilting Bee

An old-fashioned quilting bee will be held at the Bidwell House on Saturday, August 18, at 11:00 a.m. We will work around a spacious table in the Bidwell office, an area that was once a storage barn for the 1790 extension to the house. Quilters and interested non-quilters are invited to bring their projects, whether completed or works-in-progress, to share ideas and meet fellow quilting friends.

Originally the quilting bee was to feature a nationally known author, Elise Schebler Roberts, whose new book, *Quilting in America,* is due for publication in October. For personal reasons, Roberts is unable to come to Massachusetts; however, two of the Bidwell House quilts were photographed and will represent the state in her book.

At the quilting bee, some Bidwell quilts will be exhibited: an indigo polished whole cloth, a whole cloth red-dyed quilt, a flowered chintz whole cloth, and the "Feathered Star," an example of hand-pieced quilting.

Alice Hale of Sunset Farm B & B in Tyringham, president of the Tyringham Historical Society, will be on hand to show her grandmother's and great-grandmother's Tyringham quilts. An informal panel discussion on quilting yesterday and today will be led by Barbara Tyron, Esther Heffernan, and Mady Miller. All quilters are requested to bring a boxed lunch and something to share; the Bidwell House will provide lemonade, tea, and coffee.

For more information and an introduction to the Bidwell House Museum's quilt collection, please visit www.bidwellhousemuseum.org or call 413-528-6888. There will be no charge for the workshop.

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Rural Character, Water, and Future Wars

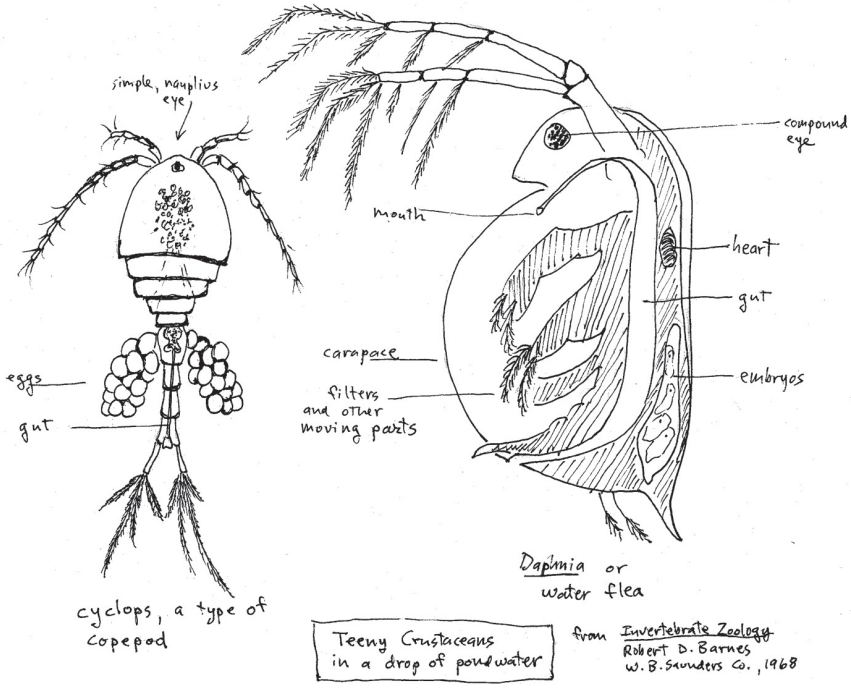
We talk about "rural character" here in Monterey from time to time, mostly in the same breath with "preserve the …" If we look closely at this concept we are bound to find it means different things to different folks.

Some people love to drive the country roads, maybe even gravel-surfaced ones, not too fast, so they can enjoy the closeness of our big deciduous woods. They find shade, dappled sunlight, and not much undergrowth, so they can get a view into the wild. Might see a turkey, a deer, a red fox.

Other folks like the mountaintops, the clear air and the view. There is for many a spiritual thrill, best found at the upper elevations, where the works of humankind are small and distant. Way up high a person can feel close to a god or gods, or at least to the great soaring birds, and can survey miles of perfect creation, then maybe go home and make a fine poem or painting.

Then there are the low places, which here in the northeast are often wet. This is another part of the world, different from the deep woods and mountaintops, but just as much an integral part of the rural scene. In fact, we are blessed with abundant water and wetlands here in Monterey. We have all sorts: lakes, ponds, brooks, rivers, boggy places, muddy seeps, and clear bubbling springs.

I've heard the next wars will be fought over water, not oil. If this is so, we'll have much to defend here in Monterey. Maybe we should start now, first with a look at why we care about all this water. Surely we can't drink *all* of it.



Lately I have been teaching stream and pond ecology to groups of children in Columbia County, New York. This landscape is similar to the Berkshires, right next door. There's more open farmland and there are many farm ponds, some natural but most dug out or dammed up by people.

Even folks with no thirsty livestock like to put in a pond. It seems to add to the "rural character" of the place and may even attract wildlife. Who would not love to see a few ducks or a doe at dusk, stepping down for a drink?

The way we control, create, or interact with wetlands can tell us something about ourselves and how we feel we do or don't fit into the natural world and its rural character. Do we mow the grass to the water's edge? How do we like mud, algae, mosquitoes, pondweeds, snapping turtles, whirligig beetles, and midges?

The children in Columbia County are excited about all these things. They like to kick up the bottom and sweep with their scoop nets, collecting little fish, snails, crayfish, and insect larvae. But a few days ago at Copake Lake, the nets were coming up empty.

The children saw a turtle, and scooped

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up one mayfly nymph. What happened to the diversity of life forms in this well-loved and settled lake? Could it be that the people have decided to promote water sports over rural character? All it takes is a lake association, some fund-raising, and a reliable herbicide. You get open water for motoring, for the particular thrill this brings. You do not get aquatic plants and the community of life that depends upon them.

We need to consider the questions, "Why is water so valuable? What will those future wars be about?" The answer is not water sports. It is life.

— Bonner J. McAllester

Music & More August Events

In a season of music, drama, and art, Music & More will host three events in August at the historic Meeting House in New Marlborough.

On Saturday, August 11, at 3 p.m., the Tanglewood Marionettes will perform "An Arabian Adventure," based on a classic Persian tale about a prince trying to rescue a princess from a tragic fate. This nationally known troupe of puppeteers blends marionette wizardry with colorful sets and classical and Middle Eastern music in a drama for children and adults. Afterward, the puppeteers will give a behind-the-scenes demonstration of their craft. Admission to the performance is free.

The following Saturday, August 18, at 8 p.m., Academy Ward–nominated film director Douglas Trumbull will host a full-length showing of his movie *Brainstorm,* which Trumbull made in 1983. During the making of the movie, the film's star, Natalie Wood, died in a mysterious drowning accident off Catalina Island. Her death threw the production into turmoil and put Mr. Trumbull at odds with his studio, which wanted to end the project.

At the Meeting House, Mr. Trumbull will talk about how he completed *Brainstorm* without Ms. Wood and over his studio's opposition, as well as about his work with a cast that included Christopher Walken, Louise Fletcher, and Cliff Robertson. A compelling look into the dark side of Hollywood, the film and talk together chronicle the ambition and heartbreak of a young moviemaker in Hollywood. Besides his work as a director, Mr. Trumbull is well known for his special effects work on such movies as *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *Blade Runner,* among others.

On Saturday, August 25, at 4:30 p.m., nine writers will gather for an annual Berkshire Writers' Free For All. Jon Swan hosts Peter Kane Dufault, Nick Hardcastle, Tess Hardcastle, Philip Johnson, Kelsey Mullen, Dory Previn, Helen Klein Ross, and Hester Velmans in a free-form talk about their work, the creative process, and a writing life in our environs. A reception will follow in the Meeting House Gallery. Admission to this event is free.

Music & More's schedule of events continues in September and October with highlights including a performance by the Manhattan String Quartet and a program combining Mozart's music with his family letters read by actor Jonathan Epstein. The art gallery at the Meeting House is open for viewing on performance dates.

Information about Music & More's entire schedule, ticket prices, reservations, and discounts for New Marlborough Village Association members is available by calling 413-229-2785 or by visiting www.newmarlborough.org.

Built in 1830, the Meeting House is on Route 57 nine miles east of Great Barrington in the center of New Marlborough, one of the Berkshires' most picturesque small towns.

❊

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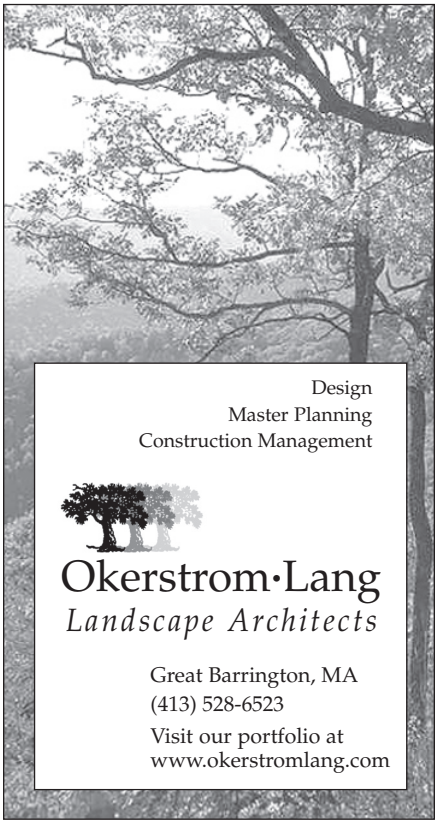
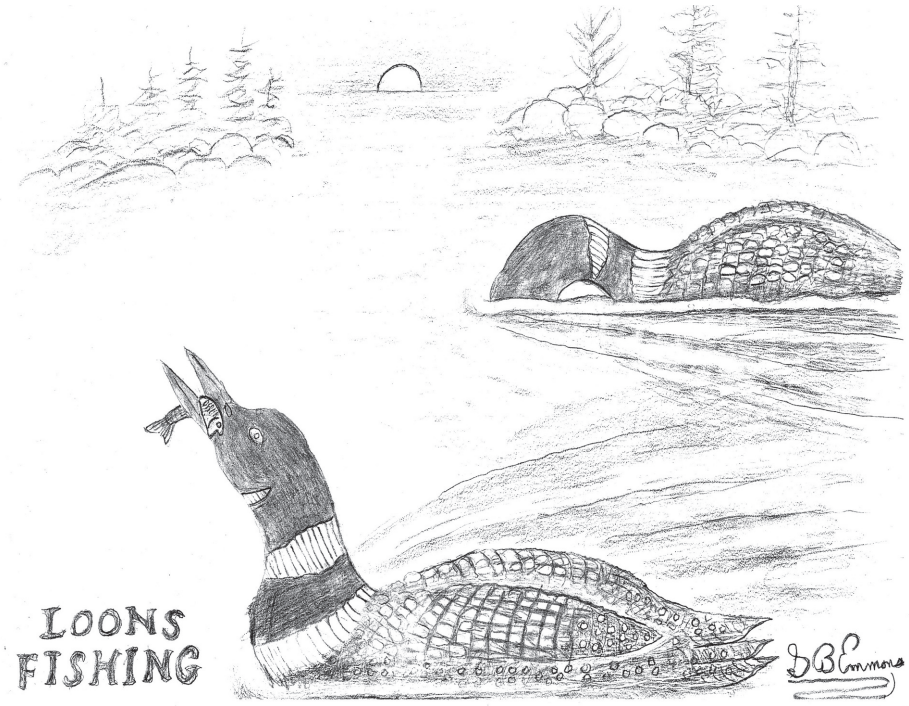


The Common Loon (Still Waters Run Deep)



On a recent vacation on Lake Winnepesaukee (a Native American word for Smile Of The Great Spirit), New Hampshire, I learned from The Loon Preservation Society there that loons have been around for some 20 million years. The appearance of loons on any body of water today is a considered a living testimony to the health of its ecosystem. On Lake Garfield, extensive shoreline development and boating activity prohibits nesting and summer residence, even though the occasional appearance of this sentinel of environmental quality has been reported.

"Still Waters Run Deep" is a metaphor drawing an analogy between a quiet person's depth of emotion and a quiet surface over a deep body of water. Perhaps more poetic than factual, it is an interesting connection between mortals and nature. Another might be the title of the song "Old Man River" comparing the passage in time of channels of the Mississippi River to the lifeline of a human being. Our affinity for aquatic images may be due to the more than 98 percent water composition of our own bodies. In our local area, the property appraisals of water front lots are greatly inflated over those that are not. Such is the bottom line of water proximity.

The New Hampshire Loon Preservation Society also states that loons are prominent in Native American myths, probably because of their calls at night. One of their calls, the tremor, has a shrill haunting melody of unearthly laughing. Another call, the wail, is as mournful as the loud lament of a grieving squaw over the loss of a loved one. It also sounds like the howl of a wolf or coyote, so much so that the Society has recorded the wail of the loon being answered by the howl of a canine, each triggered by the other, making a lunar symphony by two separate species.

Although Native Americans are known for using metaphors in the descriptive language used in names, as shown in the movie *Dances With Wolves,* other cultures are not exempt, as illustrated in the film *The Godfather* by the Sicilian expression "swims With The fishes." This is what loons commonly do in waters hundreds of

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Monterey Lights the Way with New England GreenStart

Congratulations to Monterey for being among the Massachusetts towns that are "renewably" lighting the way to more sustainable living through participation in New England GreenStart, the renewable energy product offered by CET. Almost 10 percent of Monterey residents are supporting renewable energy directly on their National Grid electric bill. That's impressive! In turn, their monthly premiums earn matching funds that Monterey can use for a town renewable energy project. Monterey has earned more than $9,000 for a community renewable energy project as a result of their participation in New England GreenStart. This $9,000+ can leverage another $9,000+, totaling more than $18,000 to date. Plans are underway for a solar photovoltaic system on the town garage.

Your Monterey neighbors enrolled in GreenStart include: Joe Baker and Bonner McAllester, Janet Cathcart, Laurily Epstein, Grenadier Pottery, Alice O. Howell, John Humphrey and Maggie Leonard, Michele Miller and Peter Murkett, Colta and Garry Ives, Anita Linden, Glynis Oliver and Will Marsh, Ellen Pearson, Charles Pierce and John Farrell, Gisele Pinck and Kathy Coyle, Katherine and Marc Roberts, Jon Sylbert and Lisa Smyle, and Peter and Evelyn Vallianos. **We hope you'll join them.** We were unable to connect with all the Monterey GreenStart enrollees by the *Monterey News* deadline and apologize for any errors or omissions. A more complete list will be given in the next issue, if available.

For more information, visit www.greenstart.net, www.cetonline.org, or call Laura Dubester at CET (413-445-4556, ext. 13).

— Laura Dubester and Alan Silverstein, CET and New England GreenStart

feet deep, to be close to their main food source. They not only paddle with their webbed feet, but fly under water with their wings, sometimes getting caught in fishing nets seventy feet under the surface.

When the days grow short in September, autumnal waterfowl migrations also motivate loons to leave inland waters, but sensors implanted on individuals and tracked by satellite telemetry tell us that instead of going north to south, they move west to east, where they will winter on the nearest part of the Atlantic coast. Their absence leaves a void in human awareness of the spirit of the waters.

Waves talking to the shore
Their voices heard no more!

— G. B. Emmons

Exploring Monterey's Cemeteries

On Saturday, August 11, from 1 to 3 p.m., the Monterey Historical Society will sponsor a walk of Monterey's two oldest cemeteries, Henwood and Old Center dating back to 1756, located on Beartown Road, one-half mile from Tyringham Road. Linda Thorpe and Cynthia Hoogs will lead the walk.

Linda Thorpe has served on the Monterey Cemetery Committee for fifteen years and has an extensive knowledge of old cemeteries, their inscriptions and progressively detailed carvings.

Cynthia Hoogs' interest in genealogy began about thirty years ago with a search for her ancestors, which led her to cemeteries throughout Massachusetts, especially on Cape Cod. She also marvels at the old style of writing and spelling, particularly on stones prior to 1830. This hobby expanded into a project to compile the inscriptions from cemeteries in various local cemeteries, including all five of Monterey's, fifteen from Sheffield, the primary cemetery in Tyringham, and four old cemeteries in Great Barrington. She also compiled the obituary notices from the *Berkshire Courier* (a local newspaper) from 1834 to 1890.

We will meet at Henwood Cemetery at one o'clock. Lemonade will refresh.

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AUG 18, 8:00 PM • BRAINSTORM, a film directed by legendary filmmaker and visual effects pioneer Douglas Trumbull. Starring Christopher Walken and Natalie Wood (in her last film appearance). Presented by Douglas Trumbull and followed by discussion with the filmmaker.

AUG 25, 4:30 PM • BERKSHIRE WRITERS FREE FOR ALL. The best of the Berkshires present their latest poetry and prose in this lively and provocative annual event. Hosted by Jon Swan. **IT'S FREE!**

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Letter From Washington
Inside the Hallowed Halls …

The marble halls are hard, especially when one is wearing high heels. People constantly call and voice their opinions on the phone while visitors browse the famous pictures of decades past on the walls. There are faxes to be read, errands to run, tours to give, and mail to be sorted. The little tasks in the day of a senate intern, such is life in the office of the Honorable Edward M. Kennedy. The office functions like a well-oiled machine, professional, open, and efficient. The team works around the clock to make sure the senator is able to carry out his role as a prominent leader in the United States Senate while actively proposing an astounding amount of new legislation. As the Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, Senator Kennedy is familiar with a vast array of issues. In the last few weeks, he helped draft the controversial immigration bill, the Employee Free Choice Act, and a higher education bill; he is also on the Judiciary Committee and the Armed Services Committee.

The senator has several offices on the third floor of the Russell Building where his staff members oversee research, prepare memos, and draft legislation and speeches, as well as assemble the large amount of material for the senator's eloquent and frequent presentations on the Senate floor. There are several specific offices, including ones for health, labor, foreign policy, education, armed services, and judiciary that add up to an impressively large number of staffers and summer interns. I am one of at least thirty interns working in the senator's personal office, although there are usually a maximum of twenty working in a given week. We have a number of tasks throughout the day to attend to, which include: checking faxes and email, sorting letters that come by snail mail, data entry, proofreading constituent responses, processing various questions, delivering and picking up letters and packages, bringing materials over to the Senate floor for the senator, giving tours of the Capitol, answering phones, scheduling voicemails, and helping any staffers who arrive with a job for us.

We also attend various Senate committee hearings. Thus far I have been to five or six ranging from discussions about new EPA ozone standards, to Islamic extremism in Europe, to the aging population of American farmers. These hearings, while very informative if the topic is not often discussed in mainstream media, often provide a general overview, and one assumes that a great deal more discussion occurs behind the scenes. We usually go with a fellow intern, take notes, and then write up a memo on the hearing. The memo summarizes the various testimonies and specific concerns of the senators in attendance that are presented and addressed in the question-and-answer session. These expressed qualms usually highlight polarizing positions of both Democrats and Republicans, but occasionally they reflect an agreement that in the future could potentially result in a bipartisan proposal. Our memos are sent on to the appropriate Kennedy staffers and are filed.

The other interns in the personal office are all from their own unique set of backgrounds that provide a diverse work environment most enjoyable to take part in. We fill in the time between jobs and assignments with lively political conversation, completing advanced crossword puzzles by combining knowledge, and at times watching the happenings on the Senate floor from the viewing gallery. Our professional-looking Senate badges allow us to make it to the Capitol in good time on the awesome underground trolley that zips back and forth, all part of the underground village beneath the Senate, House and Capitol. Procedures on the floor allow for a more complete assessment of the rhetoric in politics, and one can appraise the varied opinions and speaking abilities of many of the senators. The rules that govern the proceedings are fairly complex and formal, yet there is an almost indescribable camaraderie in the Senate despite the crystal clear party lines. When any vote comes up, hearing the roll call and the yeas and nays sends a shiver up my spine. It is incredible to see, for most votes at least, all one hundred senators in the same room demonstrating a basic principle of democratic government. It is also an excellent time to continue learning to identify all the senators.

In daily walks around the halls, we interns generally yield an arriving elevator to a senator who is also waiting. My favorite elevator experience occurred one afternoon as I was headed to do research in the Senate Library on the basement level. I was waiting when Senator Kerry, whose office is on the same hallway as Senator Kennedy's, walked up next to me while talking on his phone. I backed up a pace and let him head down before me, and then stepped back up and pressed the

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down button again. A minute later several men in suits walked up next to me, and as I glanced over I saw Nancy Pelosi; once again I took a small step backward. It took me about ten minutes to get downstairs, but was well worth it.

Senator Kennedy may be a busy man, but one hot humid afternoon several interns gathered along with a group of national student youth leaders to hear a brief speech. After a mere few sentences a complete hush had fallen over everyone there, adults included. He introduced his two dogs first, and then thanked everyone for coming to Washington, D.C. Throughout his brief remarks his desire to continue in his brothers' footsteps and serve the people was clear, and he stressed to those present that while it was wonderful for them to tour the buildings, it was even more important for them to pay attention to what happens inside throughout their lives. He closed by urging them to return to their own communities and volunteer their time to address local needs and to give back whenever and wherever they could. Five minutes later it was over, and after the applause died down the interns seemed as awed as the rest of the students.

In the tradition of giving to the community, many interns on Capitol Hill participate in some type of community service program. In the second half of the summer, the interns in Senator Kennedy's personal office went one day a week to a local summer school called the Freedom Youth Academy. The students there are mostly from the inner city, and we spent the morning helping them with their math homework and assisting in classroom presentations as well as playing games and visiting with them. It is a nice change from office life, but it is also a window into a different world for many of us, and at times a challenging excursion back in time. Trying to recall the basic math skills and then attempting to teach someone else makes you feel fairly incompetent, and ultimately helps you admit how dependant you are on a calculator at this point in your life.

So the summer has been varied, with additional visits from friends at school, meeting new friends, a weekend with the Roosevelt Institution, reading Harry Potter by the pool, and of course attending the summer class. I've learned a great deal about the inner workings of the Senate and the importance of office details, and have met some very dedicated and knowledgeable experts. I'm still not sure if I'm destined to become a politician, but thankfully I do not have to decide that at this point. What I do know is that Senator Kennedy is both liberal and skilled. He seems to strive for policies that can represent those who elect him, and yet he also understands that the art of finding solutions through politics requires compromise, one of the many reasons I personally have a huge amount of respect for him.

— Tarsi Dunlop

New Home for Local Community Radio

Berkshire Community Radio Alliance, Inc. (BCRA) is thrilled to announce that it has signed a lease with Joan Ackerman for the basement level of the Granary Building on Rosseter Street in Great Barrington. Formerly the home of the Berkshire Food Co-op, the 1800-square-foot space will be the new home of WBCR-LP 97.7 FM, a member-driven, all-volunteer community radio station serving south Berkshire County. The new space will feature full handicap accessibility and a high-efficiency heating system.

"We'll now have accessible space for studios, a meeting room and a media library, as well as access to the Mixed Company theater upstairs for events," said Jan Seward, BCRA board president.

WBCR-LP 97.7 FM offers any Berkshire County resident access to the local airwaves. Community members are invited to join the station and produce radio programming after training in the station's Great Barrington studio. More information, along with a current programming schedule, can be found on the station's website at www.berkshireradio.org. For information call Jan Seward, 528-6913.

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Devil's Labyrinth, John Saul
Ever Running Man, Marcia Muller
New England White, Stephen Carter
Gravedigger's Daughter, Joyce Carol Oates

Adult Nonfiction
Lone Survivor, Marcus Luttrel
Leviathan: The History of Whaling in America, Eric Dolin
Teenage: The Creation of Youth Culture, Jon Savage
The Diana Chronicles, Tina Brown
Dog Days: Dispatches from Bedlam Farm, Jon Katz

Children's
Internet Predators, Toney Allman
Amelia Bedelia's Masterpiece, Herman Parish

Contributors

We thank the following folks for their recent contributions in response to our annual funding appeal. Your support makes it possible for us to continue publishing.

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Query

Last summer I purchased a large (28" x 19") unframed collage at the town tent sale. It is unsigned and untitled. I would appreciate receiving any information regarding this lovely work of art.

—Sheila Marton,
slnmarton@earthlink.net,
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Calendar

Every Tuesday & Friday in August: Music nights at Monterey General Store. See ad, p. 2.

Saturday, August 4: Magician Greg McAdams, 10:30 a.m., Monterey Library. See p. 9.

Thursday, August 9:

Free Blood Pressure Clinic, 2 p.m., Town Hall Meeting Room.

Saturday, August 11:

Lakefest, a day of fun activities for whole family, Hatchery pond and Lake Garfield town beach. See p. 3.

Walking tour of Monterey's two oldest cemeteries, Henwood and Old Center, which date back to 1756, led by Linda Thorpe and Cynthia Hoogs, 1 to 3 p.m. Meet at 1 p.m. at Henwood cemetery on Beartown Road, one-half mile from Tyringham Road.

Storytelling and children's activities led by Denise Andrus, Library, 10:30 a.m.

Puppetry by the Tanglewood Marionettes, "An Arabian Adventure," 3 p.m., New Marlborough Meeting House. Free, 413-229-2785. See p. 17.

Tuesday, August 14 (and every second Tuesday): Monterey Blue Grass Jam, 6–8:30 p.m., Meetinghouse basement. Open to all skill levels; for information call Jeff Litishin, 413-528-1343.

Tuesday, August 21: Free Health Screening, CHP, 10 a.m., Town Hall.

Saturday, August 18:

Old Fashioned Quilting Bee, 11:00 a.m., Bidwell House Museum. Please bring boxed lunch and something to share. For quilters and non-quilters. Info 413-528-6888. See p. 15.

Storytelling and children's activities led by Denise Andrus, Library, 10:30 a.m.

Film and Discussion with Douglas Trumbull, director of *Brainstorm,* New Marlborough Meeting House, 8 p.m. $20, 413-229-2785. See p. 17.

Saturday, August 25:

Square and contra dancing, 8:30–11:30 p.m., Sheffield Grange, Rt. 7, Sheffield. Music by Mountain Laurel. Caller Jim Gregory. All dances are taught; beginners and children are welcome. Adults $6, children $3. Information 528-9385.

Literary Discussion, "Writers Free for All," hosted by Jon Swan, New Marlborough Meeting House, 4:30 p.m. Free Admission. See p. 17.

Saturday, September 1: I Love Monterey Day: parade, book sale, picnic lunch and live music, green tours. Activities begin a 9 a.m. See p. 4.

The Observer
June 26–July 25

High temp. (6/26, 7/10)	88°
Low temp. (7/2)	45°
Avg. high temp.	76.2°
Avg. low temp.	55°
Avg. temp.	65.6°
Total rainfall	4.9 in.

Precipitation occurred on 16 days.

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Contributions from local artists this month:
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Bonner McAllester, p. 16.

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